National Policy on Curbing Pollution of Mega Rivers

4289. PROF. M. SANKRALINGAM : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what steps Government have taken to cleanse Ganga in the recent past ;

(b) whether Government have taken stringent penal action against those factories which are still polluting Ganga; and

(c) whether Government propose to prepare a national policy on curbing pollution of major rivers ?

THE MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) Ganga Action Plan Phase-I, which was initiated in 1985 and has come to an end on 31-3-2000 tackled only 35 per cent of the total sewage generated presently in towns along the river. Ganga Action Plan Phase-II was launched in stages between April, 1993 and October, 1996 to tackle the balance pollution load reaching the Ganga (Main Stem) and its tributaries viz. Yamuna, Gomati and Damodar. The sanctioned cost of the Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is Rs. 1276.26 crore covering works in 95 towns along these rivers. These works are under implementation.

(b) Out of 187 identified grossly polluting industries along Ganga, effluent treatment plants are operating satisfactorily in 112 units, 31 units are closed and in 44 units effluent treatment plants are not operating satisfactorily which are facing action under the environmental law.

(c) A National River Conservation Plan which includes the Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is already under implementation to improve the water quality in 22 major rivers in 14 States covering pollution abatement works in 141 towns.

Benefits of Ganga Action Plan

4290. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what have been the benefits of Ganga Action Plan so far ;

(b) whether it has helped in curbing pollution; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) to (c) Ganga Action

Plan Phase-I which was under implementation since 1985 has come to a close on 31-3-2000. However, in this phase only about 35 per cent of the total sewage presently generated in towens along the river Ganga has been tackled. Wherever the works already completed have been made functional the water quality of Ganga has shown improvement in terms of both the Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Dissolved Oxygen (DO), the two improtant parameters to assess the water quality. The details of summer average of the BOD and DO values at different monitoring stations along the Ganga during the period from 1986 to 1999 are given in Annexure. [*See* Appendix 189, Annexure No. 105] The remaining pollution presently reaching Ganga and its major tributaries viz. Yamuna, Gomati and Damodar is to be tackled under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-II which was approved in phases between April 1993 and October 1996 at a cost of Rs. 1276.26 crore and is already under implementation.

Pollution Level in Delhi

4291. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Delhi is the most polluted city in the country;

(b) if so, what is its level of pollution and what is the level of pollution of other metros in the country; and

(c) what drastic measures are being undertaken to minimise the pollution level in Delhi ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) In Delhi, the levels of pollutants are within the prescribed national ambient air quality standards except for Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the ambient levels of pollutants (annual average) measured in residential areas in metro cities including Delhi during the year 1999 are as indicated in the following table :

City	Sulphur dioxide (SO_2)($\mu g/m^2$)	Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)($\mu g/m^3$)	Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM)($\mu g/m^3$)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Delhi	16.3	26.5	351
Mumbai	14.4	29.9	247